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ABSTRACT

This chapter begins by explaining that cultural literacy is the ability of a community to create relationships, processes, and institutions aimed at multifaceted community development using indigenous resources (natural, human, social, and cultural). Literacy development in a rural community involves three equally important dimensions--social, educational, and cultural--with corresponding modes of action including adult education, social work, and cultural work. The sociocultural gap between a modern society and a rural society leads to a weakening of the rural community's natural ability to institute development efforts and results in a vacuum, mainly in the social and cultural dimensions of the literacy problem. The history of Czech Republic society after 1948 disrupted the integrity of literacy and considerably weakened institutions responsible for these efforts. Since 1987, Receptar--a television program--has successfully simulated the roles of institutions involved in literacy development and the creation of literacy strategies for rural areas. Receptar, which means "book of prescriptions" or "book of recipes," illustrates how modern forms can be linked to premodern content. Information is collected from viewers and is analyzed, checked, and evaluated. Receptar broadcasts have led to countless community development projects that have created new jobs and profits. The success of Receptar demonstrates that when certain institutions responsible for literacy development become dysfunctional or disappear, their function can be taken up by a television program that can serve, on a large scale, as a guide for community development projects and efforts. (LP)

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Chapter 14
TELEVISION & LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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THEORETICAL TENETS

There are several dimensions to the development of cultural literacy (Key Term: kulturni gramotnost = (cultural) literacy = alphabetisation) in rural areas of the industrial countries of Europe and North America, and several possible approaches for achieving it. Essentially the approach will depend on the concrete socio-cultural situation not only in the country as a whole but also in the region. The current situation in the Czech Republic is specific because Czech society is undergoing a major transformation as a result of the revolutionary events of 1989 and the years following. This is why the problems dealt with by our literacy development project have been increasing and why, in addition to the usual problems produced by industrialization, we find problems generated by privatization (and the restitution of formerly private property).

In light of the many dimensions of the project, and the possibility of several approaches, it is important to explain certain theoretical and methodological tenets underlying the observations that follow.

By (cultural) literacy, I mean the ability of a regionally and structurally delimited community to create relationships, processes and institutions aimed at a multi-faceted social, spiritual and mental cultivation of that community, based on its own indigenous resources (natural, human, social and cultural), possibly with help from outside.

The nature of literacy and the type of action taken to improve it will differ in different historical types of society. If we accept the methodological and heuristic approaches based on the classification of socio-cultural entities into

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premodern, modern and postmodern[1], we can observe that:

In the **premodern** socio-cultural type, the ability to generate and reproduce cultivation processes through literacy efforts in a rural area is natural but not very dynamic or innovative. It is mainly limited to reproducing traditional meaning structures. Outside intervention is restricted and untypical, increasing only with industrialization, ubanization and democratization.

In the **modern** socio-cultural type, the ability to generate cultivation processes is increasingly disconnected from traditional meaning structures and ever more closely tied to processes of rationalization and universalization.[2] A never-ending flow of innovations deepens the gap between the modern culture and the traditional cultural bases of rural communities. This diminishes the ability to generate cultivation processes from inside the community. Internal generation is increasingly replaced by external intervention through the now dominant processes of industrialization, urbanization, democratization, Europeanization, etc.

In the **postmodern** socio-cultural type, the ability to generate cultivation processes through literacy efforts is reassessed. The assessment shows up the defects and limitations created by modern culture and at the same time it seeks out and finds possibilities for re-introducing resources for the general cultivation of a rural community, that is, resources of a premodern type. The toleration for the incommensurable which is typical of postmodern knowledge and sensibility[3] is reflected in efforts directed not at a search for a general, universal model of literacy development in rural areas, but rather at bringing together practical development projects and drawing inspiration from their heterogeneity.

Literacy development, understood as an intentional intervention in the life of a rural community, has three equally important dimensions: the **social**, the **educational** and the **cultural**. Since these terms are used differently in the various contexts of European thought, I should explain them briefly.

If the aim of a literacy development strategy is the general cultivation of a community and its individual members, then an integrated approach is needed. Development cannot be limited to activities for cultivating spiritual life, such as adult education, because it is also necessary to eliminate social tensions in the community - deviant or even pathological tendencies. These are not problems dealt with by adult education but by social work. Yet even that does not cover everything. Communities possess certain cultural skills and related meaning structures which take material shape in traditional culture and folklore. These must not only be protected[4] but developed, and that falls neither to adult education (except in special cases) nor social work but to cultural work.[5]

So to the three dimensions of literacy (the social, the educational and the cultural), there correspond three modes of action: adult education, social work and cultural work. Literacy development strategy consequently includes all three.

The modern way of thinking, representing as it does the cultural logic of

industrialism/capitalism, stresses the educational dimension of literacy. This links the cultivation of a community with systematic book-based instruction and the accumulation of rational knowledge and interchangeable skills. On this point, modern thought is the faithful inheritor of the Enlightenment ethos. As Habermas would put it, in a modern society, the social and cultural dimensions of literacy, along with the traditional base of the rural Lifeworld [Lebenswelt], are absorbed by the modern System.[5]

This absorption by the System can be described metaphorically using such terms as industrialization, urbanization and rationalization. But that is not important. What is important is that the creation of a socio-cultural gap between modern society and rural society (a gap to which the System/Lifeworld distinction can be applied, with some simplification) leads to a weakening of the community's natural ability to institute an internal dialogue leading to cultivation. The result is a vacuum, mainly in the social and cultural dimensions of the literacy problem (less in the educational dimension). Into this vacuum come modern interventions from the outside, particularly those of an educational nature.

The following table provides a simplified illustration of this way of understanding the problem:

Cultivation of a Rural Society by Literacy Development

Aspects of Literacy	Literacy Development Activities
education level of adult population	adult education in various institutional forms
social life and social relations	social work in various institutional forms
dialogue between modern and premodern culture (traditional culture and folklore)	cultural work in various institutional forms

The above table is not intended to describe a hierarchy and its terminology is flexible. Nothing prevents us from seeing adult education as a *sui generis* type of social work, or social work as a *sui generis* type of cultural work. The terms are not important; what is important is to examine the problem in all its aspects.

The value of this approach can be seen much more revealingly when a society is undergoing really revolutionary changes — certainly the case in the Czech

Republic and other postcommunist countries. What changes is not only the various aspects listed on the table but also the character of the institutions that look after literacy development. In some cases, the institutional base may even temporarily disappear (because of problems with the economy or privatization, or a legislative vacuum), and symptoms of anomie may then appear for a short time in certain well-defined spheres of social life. The result is a focus on revitalizing the community's own resources for cultivation as well as on more effective intervention from the outside — from the System (the state). Where the System is unable to act, either through institutions or through individuals, the only remaining possibility is to act through what might be called replacement institutions such as the mass media. The result is a seemingly paradoxical situation: in the absence of institutions, the most influential representative of modern industrial society — namely television, the "enemy" of the Lifeworld — becomes a beneficial method of intervention (in well-defined cases of course).

SOCIALISM & LITERACY

What then is the situation in the Czech Republic regarding the various aspects set out in the above table?

The development of Czech society after 1948 considerably disrupted the integrity of literacy. I do not mean a disruption in the sense of a basic disconnection of rural communities from their traditional bases, or a subsequent decay of the various aspects of literacy represented on our table. Rather there was a disruption and restructuring of sociocultural relations as a result of the ideological denial of various aspects of sociocultural reality. Ideological denial meant, for example, that social problems of capitalism such as unemployment, homelessness and poverty had supposedly been eliminated. The result was the disappearance of institutions and modes of action whose purpose was precisely to eliminate or regulate such "problems of capitalism".

Now that these problems are returning along with the restored social structures, the corresponding network of institutions and modes of action no longer exists (though it is in the process of developing). As a result, it is not possible for the time being to look after the sociocultural life of rural communities (and non-rural ones as well) in the same multi-faceted way and at the same level as in Western Europe, where social policy and social work have been developing without much disruption, and where at the same time social institutions and projects have been flourishing.

Massive industrialization and the collectivization of life in rural areas brought new forms of social behaviour as well as new meaning structures to traditional culture. The question thus arises whether, as a result, the old patterns of premodern rural culture were covered over, forgotten or erased outright. To answer this question, we must take into consideration the paradoxes of socialism. On the one hand there was massive industrialization and

collectivization of the countryside; on the other hand the regime paid scrupulous — even exaggerated — attention to traditional culture. It must be borne in mind that the regime fetishized the "people" (though often in "folkloric" terms).

This fetishization served as a counterbalance to elitism and as a source of legitimacy for the regime (though unlike ideological indoctrination, it was of course never translated into practice). The "people" became a quasi-sacred entity, and this was reflected in programs in the fields of traditional culture (seen as "the motor force of history" and "the bearer of progress"), as well as in efforts to develop backward (mostly rural) regions. This paradoxical approach had some beneficial effects, such as an extensive institutional and organizational network within which adult education and social work were carried on. The work was deformed by ideology but there is no doubt that it protected traditional and more recently created values and enabled their further development.[6]

So unlike the case with social work, cultural and adult educational work still have an institutional basis (now undergoing considerable change) as well as a tradition. Both types of work tend to be structured in terms of Enlightenment ideals that do not take account of the need for a multi-faceted and integrated approach to the problem. For many reasons, the educational, cultural and social facets of literacy work are still seen as strictly separate and specialized activities.[7] This is going to make the complex task of developing literacy in the Czech Republic more difficult for some time yet.

A system for literacy development in rural areas was created after 1948 and it functioned over the next few decades, but it is now in crisis and in some respects dysfunctional. This has turned attention to the mass media — a completely different phenomenon from an institutional point of view. The mass media can be seen as a universalizing means of literacy development, and of a peculiarly modern type.

In a situation where — as is generally recognized — existing types of institution are undergoing basic change and are therefore weakened, it is only logical that other institutions, or in some cases individual personalities, will take up their functions. Naturally this includes the mass media institutions.

Literacy development is part of their mandate, and adapting to the characteristics of regions and communities is for them an economic necessity. I do not have in mind here specialty media such as professional journals or specialized television programs. I am thinking rather of the mainstream media that cover all sectors of activity, and in particular those programs which have the secondary or tertiary function of stimulating literacy development. In the situation of institutional crisis I have described, this secondary function comes to the fore.

THE BOOK OF PRESCRIPTIONS

In the Czech Republic and in Slovakia, the function of stimulating literacy falls to a television program called *Receptár*, which means "book of prescriptions" or "book of recipes". Analysis shows it to have considerable potential for all three aspects of literacy promotion.

This brings us to two important questions:

1) Can television — the messenger of modern industrialism — revitalize and mobilize the indigenous resources for literacy in a rural community?

2) Are these indigenous resources constituted by structures belonging to the premodern past alone, or by structures of the present alone?

With regard to question 1), the negative assessment of television and its role in the absorption by industrialism of the traditional cultures of rural communities is well known. Even postmodernists understand television mainly as a means of simulation that distances a society both from the past and from contemporary reality. The views of Jean Baudrillard[8] are very influential on this point. Yet it is precisely the simulation capacity of television — its ability to create a "second reality", a "hyper-reality" — that enables it to take up certain roles of institutions which are malfunctioning or nonfunctioning at all. Television can successfully simulate the roles of institutions involved in literacy development or in the creation of literacy strategies for rural areas. Thus a simplistic negative assessment of television cannot be accepted.

With regard to question 2), as we will see, this issue is related to the influence exercised on the public by television in rural areas. Traditional culture is not necessarily to be seen as made up solely of the indigenous heritage handed down from past generations, that which has come down untarnished by modernity, the "old". The definition of traditional culture and folklore in the UNESCO resolution mentioned above (cf. endnote 4) does not exclude a conception of the present as a source of the tradition of the near future. Thus the study and nurture of the non-systemic (in the Habermasian sense) cultural structures of the present are just as important as the reproduction and preservation of the cultural structures of the past. So there are two approaches of interest: a reproductive/preserving approach which draws on the past and its meaning structures, and a productive/living approach which draws on the present with a strong pragmatic and topical focus.

The problem of literacy development in the rural areas of industrialized countries, understood as a problem of the multi-faceted cultivation of these communities, has two aspects: a historical aspect and a contemporary aspect. A community's own indigenous resources for cultivation are created by the previously existing and reproduced tradition and also by the tradition of the rural Lifeworld which is currently in the making. This second tradition is a field

of action which television can not only enter but also to a degree mediate, providing a model for it through programs such as *Receptár*. A brief analytical description of the program will show the functional potential of television for literacy development in rural areas.

The program explores, maps, collects, analyzes, selects and evaluates existing resources for literacy development in rural and other areas. Itself a tool of intervention, it has been part of the regular television schedule since 1987.[9] By late 1992, there had been 187 different episodes as well as re- runs. The audience is very large — 3-4 million (the Czech Republic and Slovakia together have 15 million plus inhabitants). About three-quarters of the regular audience live in rural areas. Thus *Receptár* addresses 2-3 million rural viewers in the two republics. Most of them are middle-aged or seniors.

The way the program works is simple. Information is collected from viewers (over 150 letters a week, dozens of telephone calls a day and other information of various types, especially following the launch of a new periodical or other publication). The information is analyzed, checked and evaluated; a selection (of ideas, opinions, projects, etc.) is then made and broadcast. During its seven years, *Receptár* has accumulated a large bank of data, only a small part of which has actually been broadcast.

After 1989, *Receptár* developed into a rather more complex cultural institution. A magazine was launched, which now has a quarter of a million readers. A *Receptár* Club was founded, which has some 80,000 members, and a Club Foundation (Nadace Klubu) was established. In addition, the group which prepares the program also publishes theme books and pamphlets and organizes *Receptár* Days (*Dny Receptáre*) outside the studio. Thus a fairly well structured cultural institution focused on mass communication has come into being.

The original mission of *Receptár* was to create a television program that would deal with viewers' hobbies. Its basic function was supposed to be broadcasting ideas, finds and projects to occupy viewers' free time in a sensible way. This notion of "sensible way" needs explaining, especially for those having no personal experience of life in one of the societies of "actual socialism".

One of the features of such a society was a lack of goods and services. Not a lack in the absolute sense (poverty) but in the sense of a structural shortage. On the socialist market, the structure of goods and services was separate from the structure of needs and demand. As a result, a "secondary economy" very soon appeared and was more or less tolerated and even encouraged by the authorities. This economy was based on the spirit of invention, imagination and mutual aid. It produced and exchanged what the "primary economy" could not. The program quickly became a database and "advisor" for the secondary economy. If we were to look in the magazines and other broadcasts of the period, we would no doubt find analogies, but *Receptár*, with its mass influence, went beyond any such similar cases.

Thus what started as a hobby program turned into something quite different.

But then this is not unusual: the intention behind an act is one thing; the result is another.

THE "BRICOLAGE" ECONOMY

The real effects and the real status of *Receptár* are remarkable, and I will try to explain them by referring to the work of that classic thinker of French structural anthropology, Claude Lévi-Strauss. The chapter of his book *La Pensée sauvage* [*The Savage Mind*] dealing with "The Science of the Concrete" reads like a description of the situation the viewers of *Receptár* were in before (and to some degree after) 1989. In the following passage, the key term is the French word *bricolage* (*domáci kutilství* in Czech), which refers to "do-it-yourself" activity:

> There still exists among ourselves an activity which on the technical plane gives us quite a good understanding of what a science we prefer to call 'prior' rather than 'primitive', could have been on the plane of speculation. This is what is commonly called bricolage in French.[10]

Receptár became the database and the "spokesman" for this bricolage. Lévi-Strauss continues:

> In our own time, the bricoleur is still someone who works with his hands and uses roundabout means compared to those of a professional... The bricoleur is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks; but, unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project. His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with 'whatever is at hand', that is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous... [The set is defined by the fact that its] elements are collected or retained on the principle that 'they may always come in handy.'[11]

"Making do with whatever is at hand" was imposed by the primary economy of socialism on anyone who had come up against the barrier of structural shortages. The "means used by the professional" were those provided by the primary economy. Individuals then had to resort to *bricolage*, making do with what they had available, and this called for a remarkable spirit of invention, mixing together the logics and tools of premodern and modern culture. The world of socialism was a "closed universe of instruments" just like the world of *bricolage*. The end of the cited passage ("elements are collected or retained on the principle that 'they may always come in handy'") speaks directly to the reality of *Receptár*: it became, to use Foucault's terminology, a sort of official "archive" of the "discourse" of *bricolage*.

Of course the discourse of bricolage existed in parallel to the socialist economy, and there was a tacitly recognized *modus vivendi* between the two "orders of existence".

Western society does not know of such a situation, though there are analogies in the circumstances that existed during the last World War. Also, the West may not always correctly understand us on this point. Lévi-Strauss says that

industrial societies "only tolerate [*bricolage*] as a hobby or pastime".[12] In this he was wrong: socialist society was undoubtedly industrial but it tolerated *bricolage* not only as a hobby or pastime but as an activity to fill in the gaps created by structural shortages. *Bricolage* as practised in Czechoslovakia before 1989 (and still practised now to some degree) was much more than what Lévi-Strauss described; it was a sociogenic and culturogenic phenomenon/process arising from the social reality of the time.

The program became de facto and de jure an institution/medium of *mass bricolage*. This term may seem to be an oxymoron, but then paradox is one of the features of postmodernity. The existence of *mass bricolage* proves that socialist society reached a highly specific stage in which it produced, by industrial means, elements of premodern society (namely the practice of *bricolage*). In this stage, society had aspects of postmodernism but not of postindustrialism.

Receptár came to play the role of a guide to *mass bricolage*, a sort of university where Lévi-Strauss's "science of the concrete" was pursued.

This is also the starting point for my analysis and evaluation of the role of *Receptár* after 1989. Did it retain its *mass bricolage* function? The total social transformation of Czechoslovak society began in 1990, and this meant the end of the "secondary economy" and structural shortages. *Mass bricolage* should thus have become history and reverted to hobby status. But the actual situation is quite different: *mass bricolage* has shifted from the economic sphere into other spheres of social life (on a temporary basis it would seem). These other spheres are precisely those of interest in the issues of literacy development strategy.

Thus while *Receptár* is no longer a guide to *mass bricolage* in the economic sense, it now serves as a guide to *mass bricolage* in the sphere of general community development in certain localities and regions, especially rural ones.

This is understandable. It is true that the parallel economy is dissipating as the market fills with goods and services and structural shortages disappear. However the transformation of society includes the disappearance of institutions, including those which developed and implemented literacy strategy. And this is precisely what is creating the temporary need for *bricolage* — this time to deal with problems in the three dimensions of literacy (the social, the educational and cultural).

Once again, *Receptár* is assuming the role of guide and database. Here are a few examples.[13] Recently the program publicized a project to manufacture wheelchairs. After two weeks, 54 private firms said they would be interested. The result was a signed contract between the *bricoleur* who designed the chair and a company. Production was started and new jobs were created in a region suffering unemployment. And of course there was a social aspect that went beyond creating jobs since there was a benefit to handicapped people.

In December 1992, the idea of manufacturing aids and accessories for pet owners produced a flood of 1500 letters and 800 personal visits to the author of the proposal and the original *bricoleur*-manufacturer. The manufacturing process was then professionalized and enlarged, creating jobs and so forth. The

same thing happened after a project to make clothing suitable for waiters was publicized.

There are hundreds of similar examples, too many to describe them all or list them. Just as in the period prior to 1989, their common denominator is their source — the *bricoleur*. Their new feature is their clear contribution to community cultivation, the impulse they give to multi-faceted literacy development: social and cultural as well as economic development. We could track the various ideas and inventions and identify precisely the number of jobs and amounts of profit created, thus determining the project's concrete contribution to the cultivation of a region or locality. That of course would greatly exceed the scope of the present study.

A POSTMODERN LITERACY

After discussions with the authors of *Receptár*, I came to the conclusion that this program operates as a sort of author and director of community development work in all three spheres of literacy. It is a prototype for cultural action whose importance — as I suggest at the end of the article — could potentially be of even greater scope. It is simply a matter of strengthening the program's function as a model, in accordance with the real needs of regions and localities. Once the needs have to some extent been harmonized with the information and projects disseminated by the program, *Receptár* will serve a therapeutic function in the most general sense of the word.

What is remarkable here is that the source of the model (and the possible therapeutic function) lies not within the System but within the Lifeworld. It retains its nature as *bricolage* and in this sense it is identical to tradition. Would anyone deny that *bricolage* belongs to tradition? Certainly not Lévi-Strauss.

The UNESCO *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore* encourages giving "precedence to ways of presenting traditional and popular cultures that emphasize the living or past aspects of those cultures". I would emphasize the word "living" because *bricolage* — even when it uses television — certainly provides living testimony of what used to be or what is coming into being (what is becoming a source of future tradition).

Receptár carries out its educational/instructional roles in a conscious and planned way, not only with regard to the distribution of information about hobbies or economic issues, but also by overseeing a systematic exchange of information among, for example, pet-owners, gardeners, small landowners, beginner entrepreneurs and designers of public projects. It provides information to people interested in healthy foods traditional to a region. It helps with the organization of dozens of local and regional exhibits and related seminars. *Receptár* Club and *Receptár* Days activities are always important social and cultural events with intensive communication among participants. The democratic spirit at these events is not the least important of their features.

Let us now go back to our definition of literacy as "the ability of a regionally and structurally delimited community to create relationships, processes and institutions aimed at a multi-faceted social, spiritual and mental cultivation of that community, based on its own indigenous resources, possibly with help from outside". Looked at in the light of this definition, *Receptár* is an impulse from the outside, yet because it only interprets and provides a guide to what comes in from the *bricoleurs*, from tradition-in-the-making, it is also a resource (though given the nature of the mass media, a resource which is not connected to any particular local culture).

Receptár is an example of a program that takes up the functions of educational, social and cultural institutions when these have been weakened or even eliminated in the process of social transformation. These functions were not originally planned for the program; they are secondary functions, generated by the program itself. A necessary precondition to their development was the viewers' long experience of *bricolage* and *mass bricolage*, as already discussed. The program is only a prototype of televised community and literacy development in the rural areas of an industrialized country. However its existence, and our experience with it, suggest that its educational, social and cultural functions can be systematically strengthened and that they can then consciously replace, on a temporary basis (i.e. for several years), institutions which are lacking or ineffective. From a guide to *mass bricolage*, *Receptár* thus becomes a guide in the spheres of adult education, social work and cultural work.

At the beginning of this article, I indicated that there is a difference between the ability of a society to generate cultivation processes under modern conditions and under postmodern conditions. *Receptár* is a good illustration of how modern forms (System forms) can be linked to premodern content (content representing, for the most part, the Lifeworld). Such a combination is typical of the postmodern. Thus the postmodern re-examination of modern literacy development methods is a feature shared by contemporary postindustrial Western Europe and postcommunist Central Europe.

To conclude, then: under special social conditions where, as a result of the global transformation of society, certain institutions responsible for literacy development become dysfunctional or disappear, their function can be taken up by a television program which can serve, on a large scale, as a guide for processes originating in *bricolage* and analogous phenomena.

Such activity can be especially successful in societies which have lengthy experience in exchanging information from the world of *bricolage* through the mass media. The societies should also have little ethnic or socio-cultural differentiation.

Under such circumstances, the work of preparing literacy development strategies can be transferred to a public exchange through television. At the risk of exaggerating, we can say that this exchange remains in the hands of the *bricoleurs*, who serve as the mediators of a strange dialogue between the modern social System and the "secondary premodern culture" arising from *bricolage*.

The state authorities can play a role by offering moral and financial support.

Notes & References

1. I refer here to Giddens' characterization of the differences between premodern and modern societies/cultures, along with the characterization of postmodern conditions in the following works:

   Giddens, A., *The Consequences of Modernity*, Cambridge 1991, p. 102.
   Jameson, F., *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, London/New York 1991.

   Nelson, B., *Ursprung der Moderne* [origins of modernity], Frankfurt-am-Main 1986.

2. Nelson, ibid., p. 23.

3. Lyotard, J.-F., *The Postmodern Condition: A report on Knowledge*, Manchester, 1986, pp. xxiv-xxv [translation of La Condition post-moderne: rapport sur le savoir, Paris, 1979].

4. See the *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore*, a resolution adopted at the 32nd Plenary Meeting of UNESCO on 15 November 1989 (parts D and E).

5. Habermas, J., *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Bd. II* [*Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 2*], Frankfurt-am-Main, 1981, p. 182 and elsewhere. Using an opposition between Lifeworld and System, Habermas moves from Husserlian phenomenology and phenomenologically inspired sociology (Schutz) to Mead's interactionism. The Lifeworld is the spere of what is near and known to everyone, the sphere of an intimate community arising from "presystemic" and "prescientific" forms of social life. The System, on the other hand, refers to the power of institutions not based on a reality known to all or close to the community, but based rather on the abstract systems of the modern era, systems that absorb the Lifeworld (tradition) and the "prescientific" community. This pair of concepts is quite well suited to grasping the problem of literacy development in rural communities (Lifeworld aspect) which exist in an industrial invironment (System aspect).

6. New agencies and institutions started to operate in 1990 under the terms of the UNESCO *Recommendation* (see note 4), for example the "Folklórní sdruzení" (folklore association) in the Czech Republic and the "Folklórní unie" (folklore union) in Slovakia.

7. This is reflected even in the structure of government institutions: the three aspects are looked after by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs respectively. Very different ideas are to be found at academic institutions. For example, we at the Faculty of Philosophy of Palacky University in Olomouc (Chair of Sociology and Adult Education) follow a concept developed by Jochmann in the late 1960s and see literacy development as a multi-faceted, integrated process.

8. See for example his *Selected Writings*, Cambridge, 1988.

9. This and other information has been provided by the creator of *Receptár*, Dr. Premysl Podlaha and his colleague Kamil Knotek, an engineer. I would like to thank them both for all the assistance they gave me in November and December 1992.

10. Lévi-Strauss, Claude, *The Savage Mind*, Chicago, 1966, p. 16 [translation of *La Pensée sauvage*, Paris, 1962]. Lévi-Strauss's idea of *bricolage* will be essential to our further analysis of *Receptár*, especially the description of its functions. Lévi-Strauss conceived the notion as part of his study of pre-scientific and mythical thought. He said that *bricolage* is an activity in which we use non-specialized tools which are already available; the tool for any activity can be created out of whatever is already there at hand. This art of taking something existing and using it for any number of other purposes is developed by the *bricoleur*, an individual who always operates in the same closed world, where the new is arrived at by re-arranging the already available. What I am pointing to here is a logical and historical-cultural chain of thought that begins from the world of *bricoleur*, from Habermas' Lifeworld — both of which are connected to the rural world under discussion here.

11. Ibid., pp. 17-18, with two corrections to the English translation.

12. Ibid., p. 33.

13. cf. *Receptár* archives and interview with P. Podlaha.